

PRESS RELEASE  
18 January 2021



## **Metrion Biosciences and LifeArc further extend neuroscience-focused ion channel drug discovery collaboration**

*Ongoing collaboration extended for another 12 months and successfully progresses into late stage hit-to-lead optimisation phase*

**Cambridge and London, UK, 18 January 2021:** Metrion Biosciences Limited (Metrion), the specialist ion channel CRO and drug discovery company, and LifeArc, a leading UK independent medical research charity, today announced a 12-month extension of their neuroscience drug discovery collaboration, as a result of the continued success of their ongoing agreement.

The collaboration is focused on the discovery of novel selective small molecular modulators of a specific two-pore domain potassium ion channel target, identified as likely to be involved in neurological pathogenesis, and has now progressed into the hit-to-lead optimisation phase. Initially signed in January 2019, the collaboration agreement was extended for the first time in December 2019. Following the achievement of mutually agreed criteria LifeArc has now exercised the option to extend the programme for a further 12 months.

Under the terms of the agreement, Metrion provides validated ion channel and electrophysiology-based assays and safety profiling services. LifeArc uses its expertise to identify novel modulators of CNS ion channel targets and all new chemical syntheses, with Metrion evaluating the pharmacological activities of LifeArc compounds using both automated electrophysiology and manual patch clamp technologies

**Dr Edward Stevens, Head of Drug Discovery, Metrion Biosciences, said:** *“The continued success of our collaboration with LifeArc is testament to the strength of both teams and the long standing and successful research relationship between our companies. The transition to lead optimisation for key chemical series, along with continuation of selected hit-to-lead activities, is very exciting, and I look forward to working together through 2021.”*

**Dr Justin Bryans, Executive Director, Drug Discovery, LifeArc, commented:** *“We are delighted to continue our work with Metrion in the field of neuroscience, capitalising on our combined expertise and capabilities to develop potentially life-changing drugs.”*

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

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**About Metrion Biosciences**

Metrion Biosciences is a specialist ion-channel contract research organisation and drug discovery business. The Company provides customers with access to a range of high quality ion channel assays on a fee-for-service or collaboration basis. Metrion Biosciences' ion channel expertise includes an industry leading panel of *in vitro* cardiac ion channel safety assays, translational native cell and phenotypic assays for neurological and cardiotoxicity testing, and a range of other ion channel screening services such as cell line development and optimisation. Metrion Biosciences is able to provide tailored assay formats, data analysis and reporting solutions, effective project management and quality assured data packages.

[www.metrionbiosciences.com](http://www.metrionbiosciences.com)

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**About LifeArc**

LifeArc is a self-funded medical research charity. Our mission is to advance translation of early science into health care treatments or diagnostics that can be taken through to full development and made available to patients. We have been doing this for more than 25 years and our work has resulted in a diagnostic for antibiotic resistance and four licensed medicines.

Our success allows us to explore new approaches to stimulate and fund translation. We have our own drug discovery and diagnostics development facilities, supported by experts in technology transfer and intellectual property who also provide services to other organisations. Our model is built on collaboration, and we partner with a broad range of groups including medical research charities, research organisations, industry and academic scientists. We are motivated by patient need and scientific opportunity.

Two funds help us to invest in external projects for the benefit of patients: our Philanthropic Fund provides grants to support medical research projects focused on the translation of rare diseases research and our Seed Fund is aimed at start-up companies focussed on developing new therapeutics and biological modalities. [www.lifearc.org](http://www.lifearc.org)

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